

## Message Text

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ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 MC-01 CIAE-00 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 OMB-01 CIEP-01 /067 W

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R 171036Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5019

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

USMISSION NATO

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 0239

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, NL

SUBJECT: F-104 REPLACEMENT: COMMENTS OF MINISTRY OF  
DEFENSE SECRETARY GENERAL RE SELECTION  
OF THE YF-16

1. SUMMARY: DURING LUNCHEON CONVERSATION JANUARY 16  
WITH MINISTRY OF DEFENSE SECRETARY GENERAL PEIJNENBURG,  
DCM ADVERTED TO MEETING TAKING PLACE IN BRUSSELS BETWEEN  
USAF ASST. SEC. LA BERGE AND ASST. SEC. SHRONTZ AND  
CONSORTIUM MEMBERS AND ASKED FRANKLY HOW EMBASSY COULD  
IMPROVE CHANCES OF GON ULTIMATELY SELECTING THE YF-16.  
PEIJNENBURG, WHO IS BOTH PRO-AMERICAN AND PRO-EUROPEAN  
AND COMES ACROSS AS TRYING HARD TO BE OBJECTIVE, TOUCHED  
ON FOUR KEY AREAS; (A) LEADING GON PERSONALITIES;  
(B) TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY; (C) OFFSET; AND (D) TIMING.  
PEIJNENBURG'S BASIC MESSAGE WAS THAT THERE WAS A GOOD  
CHANCE THE GON WOULD BUY THE YF-16 ALTHOUGH IT WAS FAR  
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FROM SURE AND THERE WERE MANY PITFALLS. END SUMMARY.

2. PEIJNENBURG SAID CATEGORICALLY THAT MOD VREDELING HAD NOT RPT NOT YET REACHED DECISION AS TO WHICH PLANE HE WOULD RECOMMEND FOR PURCHASE BY THE GON. (PEIJNENBURG PARENTHETICALLY DISCOUNTED THE CHANCES OF THE VIGGEN). "VREDELING'S HEART GOES TOWARD THE MIRAGE," SAID PEIJNENBURG, "BUT HE HAS NOT YET MADE UP HIS MIND." VAN DER STOEL ON THE OTHER HAND WAS FOR THE AMERICAN PLANE IN "HEART AND MIND." THE OTHER KEY FIGURES, ACCORDING TO PEIJNENBURG, WERE PRIME MINISTER DEN ULY AND FINANCE MINISTER DUISENBURG; NEITHER HAD A STRONG PREFERENCE AS YET. PEIJNENBURG ADDED THAT DUISENBURG WOULD BE VERY INFLUENTIAL IN THE GON'S ULTIMATE DECISION BECAUSE OF HIS STATURE WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT AND BECAUSE OF THE IMPACT OF THE F-104 REPLACEMENT ON THE DUTCH BUDGET. PEIJNENBURG DREW A PARALLEL TO THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT WHOSE PRIME MINISTER, FOREIGN MINISTER AND DEFENSE MINISTER HAD APPROXIMATELY THE SAME ATTITUDES AT THIS TIME TOWARD THE SELECTION OF THE FY-16 AS THEIR DUTCH COUNTERPARTS.

3. PEIJNENBURG EMPHASIZED THE SAME POINT AS HAD GENERAL VAN ELSSEN, CHAIRMAN OF THE SECOND CHAMBER'S DEFENSE COMMITTEE IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE DCM LAST WEEK, THAT DUTCH INDUSTRY MUST BENEFIT AS A SUB-CONTRACTOR IN THE YF-16 PROJECT NOT JUST IN QUANTITATIVE TERMS BUT EVEN MORE IMPORTANTLY IN TERMS OF THE TRANSFER OF THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY. HE NOTED THAT THE DASSAULT PEOPLE WERE PUSHING VERY HARD ON THE ARGUMENT THAT THE DUTCH WOULD BE FULL PARTNERS WITH THE FRENCH IF THE GON CHOSE THE MIRAGE.

4. PEIJNENBURG SAID THAT THE FRENCH WERE USING THE STICK AS WELL AS A CARROT ON THE OFFSET FRONT BY LETTING IT BE KNOWN THAT THEY WERE IN A POSITION TO START BUILDING A MEDIUM-RANGE PASSENGER PLANE COMPARABLE TO FOKKER'S F-28 FELLOWSHIP (WHICH ACCORDING TO PIEJNENBURG IS SELLING POORLY). IF ON THE OTHER HAND THE GON OPTED FOR THE MIRAGE, THE FRENCH WOULD NOT PRODUCE A COMPETITOR FOR THE F-28. PEIJNENBURG IMPLIED THAT IT WOULD BE IN THE US INTEREST TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF HELPING FOKKER

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SELL ITS F-28S IN THE US AND ELSEWHERE.

5. TIMING: PEIJNENBURG THOUGHT IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT THE GON WOULD REACH A DECISION ON THE REPLACEMENT FIGHTER UNTIL AFTER THE LABOR PARTY CONGRESS IN EARLY APRIL. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE CHANCES OF THE GON SELECTING THE FY-16 WOULD BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED, ALTHOUGH NOT NECESSARILY JEOPARDIZED, BY SUCH A LENGTHY DELAY. HE

WAS CATEGORIC THAT IF THE GON DID NOT MAKE A DECISION BY MARCH 1 THEN THERE WOULD BE NO DECISION UNTIL AFTER THE LABOR PARTY CONGRESS. IRRESPECTIVE OF TIMING, HE THOUGHT THAT VREDELING WOULD RUN INTO LESS OPPOSITION IN THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS IF HE RECOMMENDED THE YF-16 THAN IF HE RECOMMENDED THE MIRAGE OR THE VIGGEN. THE SITUATION IN THE PARLIAMENT MIGHT BE JUST THE OPPOSITE.

6. AS A FINAL WORD OF ADVICE PEIJENBURG SAID WE SHOULD NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POLITICAL WEIGHT OF THOSE WHO ARE ARGUING THAT THE NETHERLANDS COULD BET ALONG WITH AND SHOULD THEREFORE BUY A LESS SOPHISTICATED AND LESS EXPENSIVE PLANE SUCH AS THE ALPHA-JET OR THE F-5E. AS A MILITARY EXPERT, PEIJENBURG SAID HE WOULD BE MOST UNHAPPY IF HIS GOVERNMENT DID NOT CHOSE EITHER THE YF-16 OR THE MIRAGE SUPER F-1. HOWEVER, HE INDICATED THAT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE FOR THE EMBASSY TO STIFFEN THE BACKBONE OF THOSE IN THE GOVERNMENT WHO WERE SUSCEPTIBLE TO PRESSURES TO BUY A CHEAPER PLANE EVEN IF ADMITTEDLY IT COULD NOT FULFILL THE NETHERLANDS AIR FORCE'S NATO ROLE.

7. DCM THANKED PEIJENBURG FOR HIS FRANK COMMENTS AND ADVICE AND LEFT WITH HIM THE TEXT OF SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S JAN 14 PRESS CONFERENCE, COMMENDING TO HIS PARTICULAR ATTENTION THE MILITARY AND ECONOMIC REASONS WHICH LED THE USAF TO SELECT THE YF-16.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT, MILITARY AIRCRAFT, MEETINGS, MILITARY SALES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 17 JAN 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975THEHA00239  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750018-1062  
**From:** THE HAGUE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750140/aaaabjof.tel  
**Line Count:** 142  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION PM  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 10 APR 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <10 APR 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <14 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** F-104 REPLACEMENT: COMMENTS OF MINISTRY OF DEFENSE SECRETARY GENERAL RE SELECTION  
**TAGS:** MASS, NL, US, FR, F-104, YF-16  
**To:** STATE DOD  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006